

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

With Observations on TRANSACTIONS at Home.

Saturday, October 13. 1705.

THE Undertaking I am now upon, is of too great Consequence, not to need some very significant Introduction; I have caution'd my Readers not to be surpriz'd, and I am taking Caution my self, not to be surpriz'd into an unsuitable manner, in a Case so nice.

I have hitherto Preach'd to my Inferiors and Equals, Men of the same Class with my self; I hope I have slip'd into no Indecencies, and have Studied nothing more, than to suit my Language to the Case, and to the Persons; I am now to speak to my Superiors, and I hope to keep that guard upon my Pen, as that nothing shall slip me, that shall lay me open to a Charge of Indecency and want of Respect; and therefore Addressing my self first to the Persons, I shall acknowledge their Character, recognize their Authority; and last, humbly lay my self at their Feet, submitting both my self, and what I have to say, to their Censure.

If any Man ask me, What need I have to

concern my self in this matter, what call to this hazard? Let him trouble himself no farther, for an Answer to such a Question; but look on the State of the Publick, and tell me, what occasion there is for Peace; if he says, the Persons I speak to, need no quicknings; I hope so too; but let him wait till he hears what 'tis I say; and if he can, then say it was a needless Thought, let him, and I'll joyn Issue with him on the Occasion; from me, let him go to Queen, and tell Her Majesty, there is no need to prels the Houses to Peace and Union; and tell the Ministers of the Church, they need not Preach this Doctrine; and when he has fixt the Charge there, I'll defend my part as well as I can.

I pretend to no Enthusiasms, or Voices from Heaven, to Command me to run this hazard; and yet I confess my self with Child of this attempt; and perswaded that I cannot compleatly discharge my self of this Work, if I do not apply my self to all
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those People, who are capable of Contributing to the general Good ; and I have a treble Necessity before me.

1. That the thing itself, is of the last Consequence.

2. That this is the last resort, the only place where the Work can effectually be brought to pass; where Clamour, Discontent, and Party-Feud, can receive their Death Wound, their Mortal blow; and where if they are not suppress'd, we cannot hope to see it done.

3. This is the Time, the only Time, and to me it seems the last Opportunity, put into the hands of this Nation, to settle the Publick Tranquillity; a Time of which, in the Words of King *WILLIAM*, in that most moving Speech, his Majesty made to his last Parliament; it may be said, if it be lost, we ought not to expect Heaven should trust us with another.

As these are the reasons moving me to this part of the Undertaking, I appeal to all Unbiass'd *Englishmen*, if they are not sufficient to justify all that may seem extravagant in the thing it self; which being granted me, shall be sufficient; and as for the manner, I'll answer for it my self.

Having premised all this, I make no farther Scruple to tell the World, that my present Work, is to Address this Paper with all possible Earnestness, tho' with the highest respect to no less an Assembly, than, **THE PARLIAMENT OF ENGLAND.**

In this difficult Task, I shall first apply my self to the House of Commons, the Knights, Citizens, and Gentlemen Newly Elected; the full Representative of all the Commons of *England*, and shortly to Assemble in Parliament, there to Transact and Debate, the most weighty Affairs of the Nation.

To you, Gentlemen, the Author of this Paper Addresses himself in the humblest manner, and with all possible Respect; but upon the most Urgent, most Significant, and perhaps most weighty Concern, that ever came before you.

Your Honours can have no Debates, concerning a Breach of your Ordinary Privileges, by an Humble Application to you in this manner, the Subject it self, carrying its own weight with it, and Entitling every

English Freeholder, to a Liberty of Speech without Doors, in a Case so extraordinary.

The Author is first your Humble Petitioner, for your Honours forbearance, to hear him make that Solemn Recognition of your Dignity, and Lawful Authority, which every *Englishman* thinks your Right; and in the Preservation of which Right, all our Safety does most intirely depend.

Assembled by the Royal Mandate, or Writ; which only serves to ascertain the Times and Places of your Meeting, you Represent all the People of *England*; you are in Conjunction with the Lords, the Supreme Authority of this Nation in all Cases, and on all Occasions, the last resort from you, there lies no Appeal by our Law; and that other Original of Power, the Collective Body of this Nation, which on any Interruption of Parliamentary Assemblies is apply'd to, is no otherwise made use of; than to revive your Authority, by any sort of Violence, Tyranny or Oppression; Interrupted or Destroy'd.

'Tis true, you have not thought fit to Declare the real extent of your Power, and how far in all Cases it may be pleaded to all other Jurisdictions; but like the Substance of Religion, in which Thanks be to God, all the absolutely necessary Points, are as plain as the Sun, and clear as the Day; however the several *addenda* and Circumstances, may seem Doubtful and Abstruse, and be puzzl'd, and made more so by Distinctions and Suggestions of Humane Learning; so that part of your Authority, on which more immediately depends the Being and Wellfare of this Nation, is direct, generally known, and needs no Comments, Distinctions, or other Gloss of Modern Invention, to represent them in doubtful Light to the People.

'Tis plain, that the Power of Redressing the Peoples Grievances, Levying Taxes, and opening their Purses, is in you; your Committees of Grievances of Trade, of Religion, of the Poor, are as so many Doors, at which the Freeholders of *England* are introduc'd; laying at your Feet, the Complaints they have to make, and by whose Application, the needful Assurances are given to the whole Body as the Case requires.

In you are the Peoples Hopes, on you Depends their Safety, Prosperity and Peace; you are Entrusted with all their Power, a *very very little Excepted*, which it is not my present Business to Discourse on; on you are all their Expectations fix'd; their Eyes, as well as the Eyes of all *Europe*, are upon you.

They are so at all Times, but more especially so at this time, as a time of more than ordinary Concern; a Critical Juncture, in which the Nation seems to be at a Crisis of Good or Evil, Safety or Destruction, Peace or Division, Happiness and Prosperity; or Universal Confusions seem to Depend upon your Councils more at this Time, than perhaps they ever did at one single Session since your Constitution was Settled, or ever may again, while we are a People.

'Tis in your Power to Dissipate the Fears and Doubts which now affect the Hearts of all Good Men, that have any Concern for the Good of their Native Country; and to Cause the Mists and Clouds of Party Malice to Sink, Dissipate, and Fly away; one hearty Vote of your most Powerful Assembly, would Damn all our Virulent Memorials, and scare away that Legion of High-Church Monsters, that Ruffle our Sovereign, Affront the Dignity and Person of the best Queen *England* ever had; that Personate the Church, and make her speak in Language her Soul Abhors; the Breath of your Mouth is able to Blast all the Attempts of Hell and *Rome*, who are for forming a Reconciliation between the Church of *England*, and all manner of Idolatry; and Widening the Breaches between all sorts of *Protestants*, both in Civil, as well as Religious Matters.

You are now Elected by the Freeholders and Corporations for the Great Ends for which Parliaments should Assemble; all those Elections which have been Tumultuous, Illegal, Riotous, or otherwise affected with Briberies, Corruption, or Ill Practices, will, we doubt not, receive their just Censure and Discouragement from your Impartial Proceedings; and all the Needful Redress be given, where Strength of Parties have Oppress'd Legal Elections; and where the Injur'd People having met with Intolerable Treatment, make their Legal

Applications to your Honourable Assembly.

Thus your House will be Effectually purged from such Members, who making use of all manner of Violences, and Illegal Methods, to get into your Assembly, give too just Cause to suspect their Designs tend to something suitable in kind when they come there; and thus the Mouths of those People, whoever they are, who perhaps have Complain'd of the Determining former Elections by Party and Number, rather than by Justice and proper Merit, will be Effectually removed; and this Parliament, as its End may be the General Good, may pursue it by Unspotted Methods, and the Mouths of the Nations Enemies may be Effectually stop'd, in the Malicious Clamours they are so forward to raise on every Occasion, which suits not their Vile and Destructive Wishes.

What tho' there may be Chosen in your Assembly, some Gentlemen who have been Mistaken; I am far from Doubting, but in all such Cases, either those Gentlemen have seen, or in *Heavens due time will see*, their Mistake; and will be far from Obstructing the General Good of their Native Country; and wherein any Gentleman may formerly have been Misguided to act contrary to the General Interest of his Country, he will either be better Instructed, or Over-ruled, by the Superiour Genius of those *English* Patriots, whose Numbers, I doubt not, will form the Greatest Part of your August Assembly.

There remains now, but one Word, which, with all Humility, the Author of this Paper Desires to say, previous to the approaching Session of this most August Assembly.

And Pardon me, Gentlemen, that there seems to be so much Occasion for the thing, as gives an humble Author too much Ground for this Presumption. Wherefore, Gentlemen Representatives, the Humble Address of this Paper, in short, for many Articles are *Needless*, is Comprehended in this one Word,

A T T E N D.

It is a Thing, perhaps some will hardly believe; and, if I were not very sure, I could

could make out the Fact, I would have a Great Care how I offered it to the World in such a Case as this ; That several Gentlemen, who with much Difficulty and Diligent Application, have obtain'd upon their Country to Choose them as Representatives in Parliament, when they have been Elected, and the Nations Business has requir'd their Attendance, have never so much as stirr'd out of their Own Country for a whole Session.

What shall we say to these Gentlemen being perhaps at the Expence of Six or Seven Hundred Pounds to be Chosen, is it for their Own Service, or their Countries ? Is it to answer the Ends of Parliament, or to serve their Private Occasions ?

'Tis true, the House is frequently called over, and sometimes these Gentlemen meet with Due Reprimands, for the Neglect of their Duty, and perhaps are put to some Expence, as well as Dishonour ; but there has been also such means made, to Excuse Non-Attendance, and such Interest to stop Enquiries of that sort, that for a whole Sessions together, many Members have never shown their Faces in the Chappel of St. Stephen's, either to serve God or their Country.

That this is Matter of Fact, as well as a Thing to be lamented, I much rather Desire to be an Instrument of Curing than proving ; and shall to that End Enter into the Bottom of this Grievance, Touching the Sore as lightly as I can, so as to make it, if possible, Effectual to prevent the same for the future.

The Service of the Country, in Parliament, was always Esteem'd an Honour to the Persons Employ'd, it was never more so than now ; the Greater the Exigence of Common Affairs, the Greater is the Trust, and the Honour grows in proportion : It cannot then be questioned, Whether it is not the Indispensible Debt of those Chosen to this Trust, to give their Constant and Diligent Labours, as a Just Acknowledgement of the Affection of their Country, and their Dependence upon the Fidelity of those they Choose ; and as a Debt to themselves, who always have, or

we think Ought to have, a great Concern in the Welfare of these Countreys, as they have a large share in the Wealth of them.

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